

"The evening air clad in the beauty of a thousand stars is not lovelier than the character of him whose whole being is passed in the region of eternal realities; who knows the awful reverence which is due from every man to his own soul; who loveth the thing that is just, and doeth the thing that is lawful and right, in singleness of heart; who keeps the temple of his soul pure and bright with the presence of the Holy One; who loves all that is beautiful in nature and art; who hates what is ignoble, and loves his neighbor as himself."

The chief aim of life, therefore, is not happiness, but service. "God doth with men as they with torches do, not light them for themselves." And that was a wise man who said: "I shall pass through this world but once; any good thing, therefore, that I can do, or any kindness that I can show, to any human being, let me do it now. Let me not defer or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again."

"God gives each man one life, like a lamp; then gives that lamp due measure of oil; lamp lighted—hold high, wave wide, its comfort for others to share."

Life would be utterly different, if men would make it different; unutterably more blessed, if men sought or cared for the elements of blessedness. Oh, that men would be true men, and that women would be the holy and gracious things which God meant women to be!

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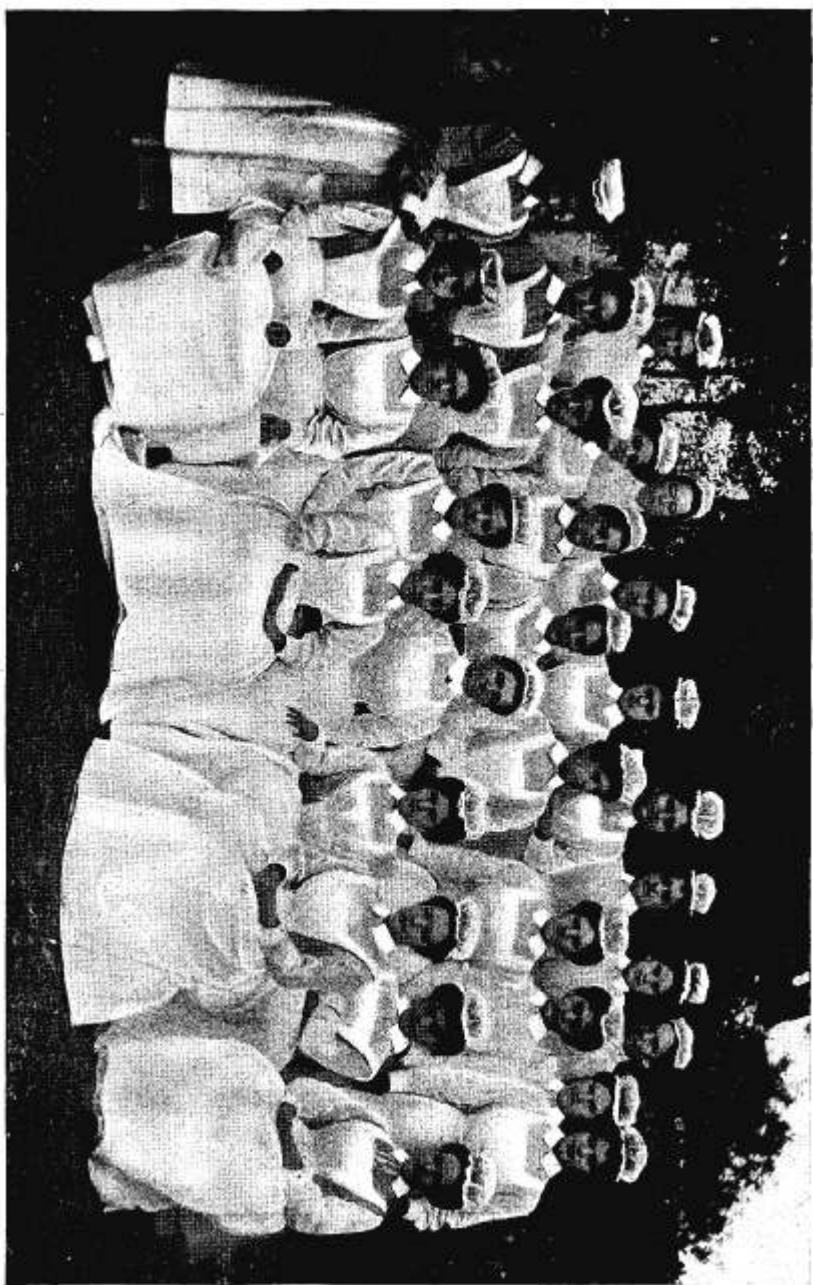
## CUBA: A SKETCH

By M. EUGÉNIE HIBBARD

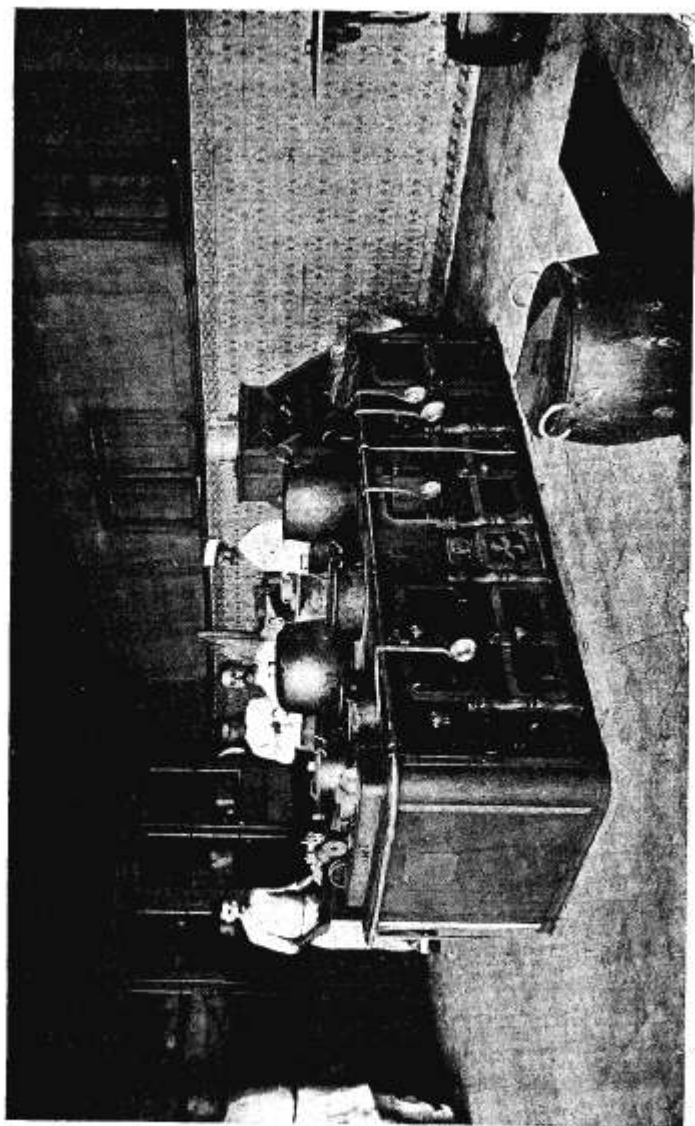
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In July of 1900 the Department of Charities was organized and placed under the direction of Major Edwin St. J. Greble. It included the management of hospitals, asylums for the orphans, aged, and insane, dispensaries for the poor, reform schools and industrial schools for boys and girls, and emergency and leper hospitals.

The condition of these institutions required extensive reestablishment, renovations, and reorganization. They were practically without funds and required immediate attention. The hospitals were without proper attendance, as the sisters of the various religious orders were returning to Spain. The order of "Hermanas de los Pobres y Ancianos" (Sisters of the Poor and Aged) remained and continued their good work. The flight of the Spanish sisters necessitated the engagement of American nurses in the capacity of inspectors of hospitals, superin-



CLASS OF NURSES AT HOSPITAL NUESTRA SEÑORA DE LAS MERCEDES HAVANA



KITCHEN IN HOSPITAL, CIENFUEGOS, CUBA

tendents, and head nurses, and of American men and women of experience in charge of the orphan asylums and industrial, reform, and training-schools, and a new era began.

The nursing service of the sisters in hospitals was more of a religious than secular nature. Though under the supervision of the medical director, they were directly influenced by the Church, and owing to their vows were unable to perfectly perform the duties of the profession of nursing. In the domestic management the work was perfectly done. Evidence sufficient to convince the most sceptical could be found in the arrangement of linen-rooms, closets, store-rooms, pharmacies, and kitchens, in the care of the linen used in the chapels, and the various aprons, gowns, etc., used by the physicians and others. The pillow and sheet shams which decorated the patients' beds on Saints' days were beautifully embroidered and lace-trimmed. No doubt great pride was taken in this department, but in the actual nursing in the wards their duties consisted principally in distributing at stated times wine and soup to the very sick and praying beside the dying. The performance of these duties surrounded them with a halo of benediction, and I was often impressed with the idea that the patients, knowing of the limitations of the sisters as nurses, appreciated more fully any attention from their hands than they did the services of the nurses, who contributed to a much greater degree to their bodily comfort and general care.

By the voluntary withdrawal of the sisters and their return to Spain the field was left clear for the introduction of American methods, and the "superintendentas," with the support and approval of the Department of Charities and the coöperation of the Cuban medical directors (with but few exceptions), were allowed and encouraged to organize the schools for Cuban nurses, equip the hospitals, modernize the system, and make necessary changes in the domestic departments. It was in a sense much easier to rebuild on a comparatively vacant site than it would have been to reorganize and uproot at the same time. So, regardless of the conditions that may have previously existed, the Americanas could work unhampered by dictate or tradition, though customs entered largely into their calculations. Through ignoring the latter it would have been an easy matter to antagonize and destroy the prospect for good work. The majority of the hospitals were well located, well built, and with a certain attraction and beauty of their own. Mercedes Hospital in Havana heads the list. In appearance it is a modern building, and is comparatively new. It is constructed on the plan of an English hospital (Birmingham, I think) and modified to suit the conditions of the country. The wards are built on the pavilion style, securing air and light on three sides. The interlying spaces are beautiful, cultivated gardens

containing the shrubs and flowers peculiar to the country. The soft splashing sound of the water playing in the fountains adds much to a feeling of pure delight in the surroundings.

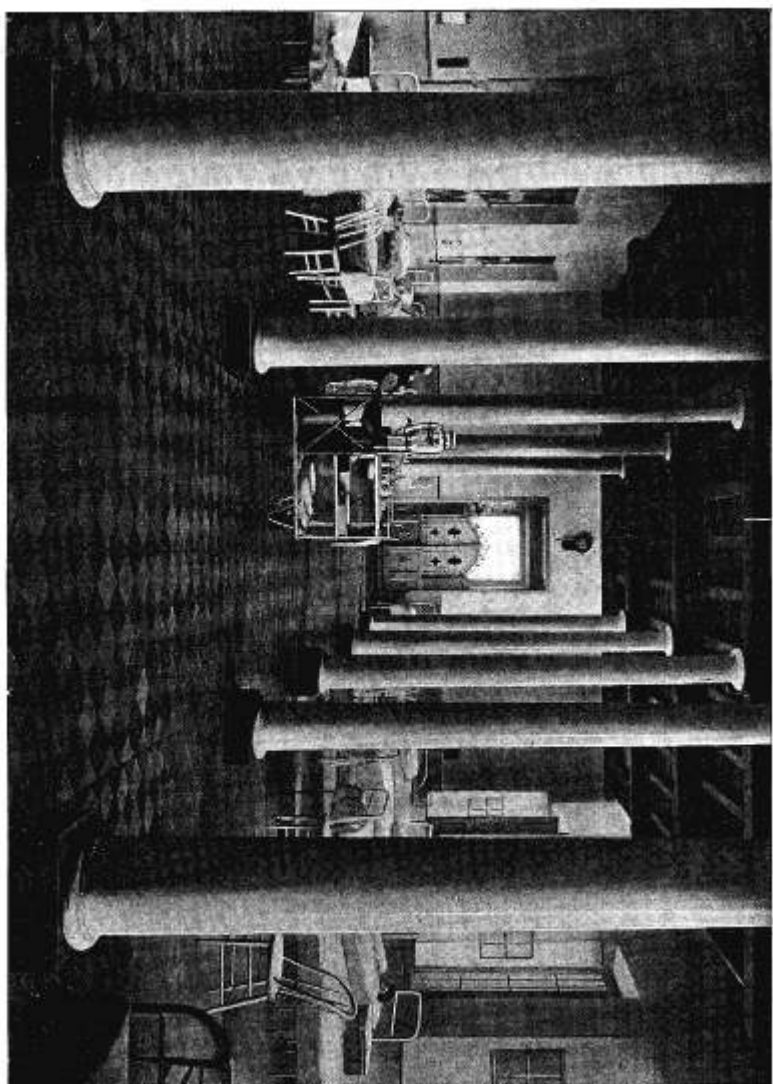
The chapel (Our Lady of Mercy), the pharmacy, operating- and sterilizing-rooms, wards, and kitchens are well furnished and equipped. General Ludlow and General Brooke, with Major Furbush, were particularly interested and instrumental in establishing a high order of things and in organizing the School for Nurses, and at the time of the military occupation, in 1898-1899, it was the only institution which could receive or care for American patients.

Dr. Nuñez, a patriot, who suffered deportation to the West Coast of Africa at the hands of the Spaniards, but fortunately escaped, has been for years and is the medical director. In the summer of 1899 Miss M. A. O'Donnell (graduate of Bellevue Hospital, New York City) had her contract annulled with the United States army service to accept the position of superintendenta. She retains her position, combining with it the duties of Inspector of the Schools for Nurses for the Republic of Cuba.

The Hospital General at Puerto Principe, being situated about the centre, was intended to be *the* hospital of the island. The headquarters of the Cuban Railroad, with the necessary workshops, etc., are also placed here, and, although several miles from the port of Nuevitas, will eventually be an important place. To assist the civil government in the work of establishing this hospital Mrs. Quintard, Inspector of Hospitals, with Miss Mitchell, were selected, and carried on the work with characteristic thoroughness and efficiency. The patios, or courtyards, are beautifully cultivated, all the wards opening into them, and they elicit general admiration.

Miss M. E. Pearson (graduate of the Massachusetts General Hospital), now the superintendenta, says: "Though sometimes discouraged, I have kept the feeling that it is a work worth doing. I am wanting more probationers, and the kind that are acceptable do not come. We have only twenty-three nurses in the school."

In Santiago de Cuba one of the largest and finest of the hospitals (I believe) is to be found. This school for nurses has been somewhat hampered in its progress by various circumstances of an internal and external nature. It is a great distance from Havana, the headquarters of the Department of Charities, and during the stage of organization the mail and telegraph service was very inefficient, making the position of superintendenta a difficult one to fill, contributing but little of the "dolce far niente" proverbial of life in the tropics. The superintendenta, Miss Louise Brakemeier, mentions that she has thirty pupils



WOMEN'S WARD—HOSPITAL SANTA ISABEL, MATANZAS, CUBA

and expects to graduate the first class in June, 1904. She deplors the lack of elementary instruction, and to overcome this a daily class is held in arithmetic, grammar, and writing. For this instruction the nurses themselves contribute the amount to cover the expense.

The hospital at Cienfuegos is making the effort to realize the expectations of those interested in the training-schools. The superintendents of this school have had many difficulties to contend with. The reports of late are encouraging. Miss C. McDonald (graduate of St. Mary's Hospital, Brooklyn, N. Y.) is superintendent.

To prove the progress of the idea, a training-school for nurses has been organized this year in connection with the Hospital Santa Isabel, Cardenas, in charge of Miss A. O'Donnell, sister of the superintendent at Mercedes Hospital.

The Alfonso XIII. Hospital on Principe Hill, Havana, now Municipal Hospital No. 1, is the largest hospital in the republic. It occupies about forty-two acres of ground and has capacity for over one thousand patients and a daily average of six hundred. It was built for the use and accommodation of the Spanish troops. Being originally a military post, it contained a large number of buildings not necessary for hospital purposes, as officers' quarters, guard-house, mess-halls, stables, etc. The majority of the buildings are of wood, and at the time of the Spanish evacuation were in a greater than lesser degree dilapidated. The United States military authorities appropriated the hospital for their own use and put the buildings in habitable order, re-roofing, building a complete sewerage and drainage system, erecting and equipping an ice and electric plant, and pulling down or burning condemned buildings. The wards are built one story high, in pavilions connecting by covered passageways not enclosed. This hospital was handed over to the municipality in 1900, with the understanding that in case of an epidemic it might be re-occupied (after due notice of a prescribed number of hours) by the United States military government, which, fortunately, was not required.

The School for Nurses was organized in August of 1900, and the difficult task of organizing the different departments and instituting order and system in this extensive and unwieldy institution was intrusted to Miss G. Moore, graduate of Bellevue Hospital, New York City, with American nurses as assistants. The hospital contains medical, surgical, gynæcological, and obstetrical departments, isolated pavilions for tuberculous cases, observation wards for the insane of both sexes, wards for prisoners, children's ward, operating-rooms, and a building for private patients. After passing through several changes the School for Nurses is now under the supervision of Miss E. Walker, graduate

of the Pennsylvania Hospital, Philadelphia, who, in addition to a limited number of American graduates as assistants, has in charge of some of the departments Cuban graduate nurses (as in all of the hospitals in the republic), the Cuban nurse gradually supplanting the foreign one, though American superintendents still remain in charge.

The Hospital Santa Isabel at Matanzas is well located, being midway between "La Cumbra" and the sea, receiving the benefit of the breezes from both points, and commands an excellent view of the harbor. This hospital was built in 1848, supplanting the Hospital San Juan de Dios of ancient date. Immediately after the war it was occupied by the United States military government and received before passing out of their hands the impress of hygiene and sanitation. The conditions existing when appropriated for hospital use by the United States army were so bad that it was necessary to burn some of the detached buildings, as decomposing bodies of Spanish soldiers were located in them. After cleansing by fire, the main building was covered with a yellow lime wash outside and inside, whitewashed throughout, additions were built at one end of the building to contain the modern sanitary equipment for the removal by hydraulic flushing of effete matter, with cross-current ventilation, and bath-rooms were constructed containing both tub and spray baths. The hospital under this energetic administration soon presented the appearance of modernity. When the civil government received the hospital for municipal use at the hands of the military government the work of renovation and thorough disinfection had been accomplished.

The Spanish sisters left Matanzas on October 1, 1900, and on October 3 the superintendent of the School for Nurses was appointed. Preliminary arrangements had been made for the formation of classes of Cuban maidens by Miss S. Henry, Inspector of Hospitals, and five candidates accepted.

The administrative staff of this hospital of one hundred beds (men only) was composed of a medical director, non resident, resident physician, practicante,\* major domo, and housekeeper. Servientas and servientes (men and women servants) were employed as nurses and orderlies in the wards. The hospital was very meagrely equipped; one hundred white iron beds were the only modern furnishing. To receive the visits of the doctor it was necessary for all the convalescent patients to sit tailor-fashion on their beds, chairs being so scarce that one of the orderlies was assigned to the duty of carrying a chair around from ward to ward in attendance on the physician in case he should wish to sit down.

\* Dresser.



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SPANISH PATIENT AND CUBAN NURSES

A few wooden bedside tables were found, but the majority were cracker-boxes, and even soap-boxes were utilized. Each patient was allowed to take his medicine, which was put up in heterogeneous bottles, including ginger beer and salts vials. One ordinary metal tablespoon did duty at medicine and meal time, and was most jealously guarded and even secreted by the owner, who diligently sharpened the edge so that it might do duty for the absent knife. The patients, accustomed to the care of the orderlies, were inclined to look upon the nurses, especially those of their own nationality, as restrictors of freedom and arbitrators of fitness. Though usually amenable to the "*Americana*," the low-muttered reply of "*Cuba libre*" was sometimes heard. The coöperation of the medical director and physicians was valuable in dealing with this class of patient, and the consistent conduct in the performance of her duty (in the face of many discouragements) by the American nurse, by her ability to relieve suffering and add to their comfort, won the admiration of the majority of the better class in a short time and *then* their confidence.

The conveniences of the hospital were often deliberately ignored by the patients and orderlies, and utensils of various shapes and sizes properly belonging to the bathrooms were left exposed and portable wash-basins were unknown. In less than a year these conditions were materially changed, modern custom and usage had supplanted the old order of things, the hospital was well equipped throughout, and an average class of Cuban girls were under instruction.

The opportunities for more diverse work were secured by the consolidation of the Woman's Hospital, San Nicolas, with that of Santa Isabel under the one roof and administration. Dr. Julio Ortiz y Cofingy has been the medical director for several years and is now in charge. Miss Mary McCloud (graduate of the Connecticut School for Nurses) is the superintendenta.

The American nurse in her work in Cuba has scored a success. She has overcome many obstacles and removed the prejudice of a people who have long been held in the leash of religious sentiment, social usage, and conventionality. She has shown that dignity can be maintained in nursing the sick, that cleanliness is an absolute necessity, and implicit obedience to authority imperative.

The important work of the medical department of the army of intervention in combating disease had been most successfully conducted. A systematic combat with tuberculosis, which had been one of the largest death-rates, had been inaugurated, and isolation of patients secured whenever possible. Free dispensaries were opened for the treatment of this disease and the clinics were faithfully attended.

"Especial credit" is due also to this department of the army, as stated in an official report of 1902, "particularly to Major Walter Reed and Major William C. Gorgas, for their extraordinary service in ridding the island of yellow fever . . . and to Dr. Jefferson R. Kean and Dr. James Carroll for their share in that work. The brilliant character of this scientific achievement, its inestimable value to mankind, the saving of thousands of lives, and the deliverance of the Atlantic seacoast from constant apprehension demand special recognition from the Government of the United States.

"Thus the city of Havana, which suffered neglect for over four centuries at the hands of Spain, in less than four years under American guidance ceases to be one of the most unhealthy of cities and proudly takes a foremost rank among the healthiest of cities. . . ."

In lighter vein, it is interesting to trace the impression made by the Cuban people and their customs. As early as 1865 George W. Carleton published a little brochure in which he alludes to "the paring of oranges and drinking from their cups of nectar, tearing through the narrow streets of Havana in ragged volantes—listening in the soft moonlight . . . to the Artillery Band in the Plaza de Armas, assisting with domino . . . at the masquerade in the Tacon Theatre, lounging with ices or delicious chocolate at the Café Dominica, dallying with cigar and fragrant coffee after the regulation breakfast, . . . vagabondizing along the shady side of Calle Obispo, and so forth through all the 'dolce far niente' of a stranger's drifting life among the lights and shadows of the Antilles' Queen."

In Havana one sees the Cuban people, and the characteristics which impress one and which can be traced to Spanish ancestry are, Celtic love of home and kindred, Iberian endurance and personal independence, strong sense of individuality, element of personal pride and scorn of industry, this latter a legacy bequeathed by the Middle Ages.

(To be continued.)

